

Rail is helping put some pedal power back in South West Surrey

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A rail operator and partnership is helping South West Surrey residents and visitors to get on their bikes.

People will be able to get their bikes checked at local train stations, thanks to a partnership between South Western Railway's (SWR) Surrey Hills to South Downs Community Rail Partnership (CRP) and a local bike mechanic.

Known as The Cycologist, Marc Cousins is visiting Farncombe, Milford and Godalming stations twice each over the course of January, February and March to provide free cycle health checks.

Marc's work is in high demand — following a recent visit to Farncombe, 16 bikes were made roadworthy in one session, allowing both adults and children to set off safely.

The Cycologist will be visiting Farncombe, Milford and Godalming stations between 10am and 2.30pm on the following Saturdays:

15th January (Farncombe), 29th January (Godalming), 12th February (Milford), 26th February

(Farncombe), 12th March (Godalming) and 26th March (Milford)

The area's stations feature in a new guide of station-to-station bike rides in the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the South Downs National Park. The guide, which is available from the stations as well as online, contains a dozen rides for all abilities starting and finishing at Farncombe, Godalming, Milford, Witley and Haslemere stations. It can be [downloaded here](#).

Marc Cousins, The Cycologist, said: "These sessions offer a friendly, supportive environment for anyone wanting a new pastime or thinking of getting back into cycling and perhaps lacking a bit of motivation or confidence.

"By organising these events the Surrey Hills to South Downs Community Rail Partnership has recognised the unique opportunity to re-establish the station as the heart of the local community, connecting rail travel with all the attractions of the local area, through the simple enjoyment of cycling".

Lucy Lomax, Line Officer for the Surrey Hills to South Downs CRP, said: "We're absolutely delighted that The Cycologist has been able to use the car parks at our stations to offer free bike health checks. These are great for members of the local community as well as people visiting the area to try one of our station-to-station bike rides.

"It's amazing how few people know just how easy it is to access the area by train and get out and explore the area by bike. There are rides suitable for all abilities, which have been planned by a local cycling expert, and all start and finish at stations on the Surrey Hills to South Downs line."